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"Socrates and the Conscientious Objector" will be the subject of one of A. D. G.'s dialogues in the SATURDAY REVIEW next week. Also the third of Major-General Sir Alfred E. Turner's papers on "German Generals."

## NOTES OF THE WEEK.

In order to make up its "mind" whether, after twenty-one months of war, it will take or not take the elementary step in war—i.e., call up its youth and manhood—the Government is going away for a "holiday". On Tuesday next, if nothing happens in the meantime, the Government will, really and truly, and for the last time of asking, decide whether it shall or whether it shan't take the terrific plunge. If it does not take the plunge, then it is going to break up its councils—it is going to dissolve instead. This wonderful result of the prolonged deliberations of the Twenty-Three reaches us just as we go to press—for weekly reviews, owing to Easter, have to do so this week very early. The only fit comment on the Government's decision at the moment seems to be: *Solvuntur risu tabulæ; tu missus abibis.*

Here we have a natural and proper sequel of nineteen months of faint-heartedness, ineptitude, and total want of foresight in those who declared war in August 1914 and have since then so fumblingly conducted it. Lord Milner, in his admirable speech in the House of Lords on Tuesday, put the case against the Government with studied moderation. He has been attacked with savage falsehoods in several Radical organs in London, but, of course, by no decent or patriotic person either in the Radical or the Unionist Parties. Naturally Lord Milner is loathed by the pro-German because he is a straight, clean man, and wishes to win the war.

One thing only has been done by the Government towards tackling the great threatening problem of the men—the Military Service Act. The SATURDAY REVIEW welcomed that Act as at least an instalment of the great

reform it had—as Mr. Walter Long and others generously bore witness to—pressed for, quite alone in the Press of this country, since early October 1914. We were right to welcome it, for the Military Service Act, if it did not break the backbone of the loose, bad Radical and Socialist No-Conscriptionists, at least stove in some of their ribs. The Military Service Act was contrived against, and a huge body of single men were spirited away from its operation and got into exempted occupations, out of which they will have to be fetched, and are being fetched, by a toothcomb; and it was only an instalment, only a compromise. But it finally smashed up the mis-called "Voluntaryism", and, as we say, it stove in some of the ribs of the No-Conscriptionist Radicals and Socialists. That was its value, a destructive rather than a constructive value, and that was why we were glad to get it. It was, and is, hated by (1) Germans and (2) No-Conscriptionist traitors.

But, of course, the first instalment could not solve the problem of the men. Construction, not destruction, is needed for this. There is only one solution, as we have pointed out again and again since October 1914. There must be no nonsense separating Benedick from bachelor, but a fair law scientifically regulating the position of men of fit age and fit bodies, whether you reach that solution by successive small steps or by one bold spring. The SATURDAY REVIEW has always regarded this question steadily and logically—as Lord Milner regarded it in his speech on Tuesday—since October 1914, when the true Voluntary movement died down and it became clear we might easily be in for another two or three years of war. Thus we find need neither to go back on anything nor to advance anything new in the matter. We said lately that it might be better, on the whole, to clean up the mess over the pledge and the spirited-away single men before the final step; but that is a detail.

In any reconstruction—or reconstructions—of the Government that come—and come, of course, they must—we hope that the best men within will be

secured, as well as the best men without. For example, within, Mr. Walter Long and Lord Robert Cecil, by their candour and courage, belong to the type we always need for Government; whilst, without, the services of such men as Sir Edward Carson, Lord Derby, and Lord Milner can never be overlooked.

It is time to speak frankly about the misuse of the term "National Unity", which is largely employed and exploited to-day alike by the disloyalists and strike-manufacturers within the trades unions and by a group of purely self-interested party politicians and their papers in London, who are, in reality, more hostile to (a) "Conscription" and (b) "Protection" than they are to Germany. Whenever there is talk of an improved Air Service, an improved defence against Zeppelins, a thorough trade arrangement for the Empire, and for the Allies a general and scientific scheme of military service, or several measures of precaution against the Germans in this country, instantly these disloyalists and self-interested party politicians utter savage screams against shattering that "most precious and inestimable thing, Sir, National Unity"! And, unfortunately, this term—a swelled and pompous term which Charles Dickens would have put into the lips of his Pecksniffs, Podsnaps, and other hypocrites—imposes on too many good and true men among patriots to-day. They really seem to believe that if this thorough step or that thorough step is taken, the trades union disloyalists will all rise and strike, and the whole of labour join them.

It is a delusion from beginning to end. We were told by greenhorns, as well as by calculating rascals, a few months ago that the country would rise, and that the unions would all strike if the Military Service Bill was passed. Well, it was passed, and nothing remotely of the kind happened. The "National Unity" was in no wise endangered. But, indeed, the expression is an expression invented and employed to-day mostly by hypocrites in order to gull and hoodwink the public. It is a cant expression, and fit only for contempt and ridicule. How Dickens would have lashed it to pieces—we want Dickens badly to-day! Those Socialists and Radicals, with their papers in London, who never tire of artfully chattering about "National Unity" are thinking of their little game of politics after the war; and they are mortally afraid of any step which may get their friends out of power. We advise Conservatives and patriotic Liberals to have nothing whatever to do with this talk about "National Unity". It is bad trash, like the late favourite Socialist and Radical description of recruiting at about its lowest ebb as "The Free and Spontaneous Rising of a People, Sir".

One of the chief reasons why the people who talk about "National Unity" are so mortally afraid of going out of office is this: they know too well that, once out, it may be a very, very long time indeed before they are in again. The country will associate them for many years to come—perhaps for decades to come—with the crime of going utterly unprepared on the land side into the greatest war of all time.

Mr. Henderson spent last week-end with the Clyde munition workers; and, on coming away, he authorised the publication of an official statement that he was pleased with the spirit he found there. There is, it appears, going to be a further inquiry into wages, which will in due time probably be described as insufficient in time of war. We think the public would be more inclined to believe that Mr. Henderson had found the right spirit in the Clyde valley if he had heard less about wages and more about the need of the country for ships of war and merchant ships. The Clyde trouble is for the moment suppressed, but it will recur so long as wages come first and service last, and so long as there are disloyalists to work upon these discontents. We cannot help thinking that Mr. Henderson might have been better employed last week-end in talking very straightly to a conference

of the South Wales miners, whose proceedings are reported this week, than in praising the Clyde workers for doing their duty. This conference of Welsh miners certainly shows very little trace of the right spirit.

It was a conference of delegates, and it met at Cardiff. Delegates are notoriously worse than the men for whom they speak, and we may perhaps hope that these Welsh delegates do not speak for the majority of Welsh miners. The conference passed three resolutions, all of them unpatriotic resolutions, one of them, at least, being dangerously near to a breach of the law. They resolved (1) to demand the repeal of the Military Service Act; (2) to demand that the Clyde labour leaders should be reinstated, and, in default of this to urge a "down tools" policy; (3) to close the collieries for two days despite a most pressing and urgent appeal from the Admiralty. These men ought to be severely punished; and if we had a stern and resolute leader to-day, he would deal out to them their deserts. The time is coming when we must break the strikers; and the weapon to do it is forged and ready to the hand of any strong executive.

Such is the falseness of perspective in which we are looking at the war that this meeting has passed almost unregarded. The Press is full of meetings about our air policy; but here is a far more serious threat than any which can come by way of the atmosphere, for it is a threat which affects our ability to hold the sea—our ability, that is, to exist at all. This truth is too simple to require a proof. It only has to be stated to be admitted by everyone. But it is very seldom stated, and therefore it tends to be lost to hearing in the louder claims of questions and policies more urgently pressed and advertised.

After much fighting of a desperate nature the Russians have captured Trebizond. In this great success their Navy has done invaluable work, enfilading the Turkish positions and clearing a way for successful frontal attacks by the Caucasian Army. A big battle was fought last Friday on the Kara Darassi River, in the course of which the Russian forces shattered the Turkish defence and overcame very formidable difficulties in the landing of men from ships. The Turks were pursued through a most difficult country and were thus unable to make effective stands at Dirona and elsewhere. Credit for this new and great victory is shared by other Russian troops operating in other directions in Asia Minor. By their desperate fighting and heroic exploits they harassed the enemy all day long and freed the coastal detachment from many anxieties.

Once again, then, the Grand Duke Nicolas has struck magnificently. Trebizond will give him command of the Black Sea, and the old trade routes that run from it into the interior will be invaluable for the supply of other military operations. As to the moral effect of this victory, it cannot be suppressed for long in Constantinople, nor will it fail to become known in every part of Turkey.

Some new aspects of the Verdun grapple have shown themselves since 15 April. The enemy, after failing to turn the French right on the Mort Homme, have put their energy into a great bombardment, searching Avocourt wood and Hill 304, and trying to reorganise their attacking forces among the low-lying woods into which the French artillery fires all day long. Enormous numbers of the French "75's" hold the battle lines, and Mr. Stanley Washburn says that it is an inspiration to be with the French troops. It seems improbable that the Germans will be able to make a strategic gain anywhere at a sane cost. Since 25 February the French lines of defence have held their present positions.

Around Douaumont bitter fighting has gone on, the French making a vigorous attack last Saturday evening on the southern parts of the German positions. It met

with complete success. Our Ally occupied some elements of the German trenches and made two hundred prisoners. On Sunday, after a bombardment of growing violence, begun in the morning and directed against the French positions from the Meuse to Douaumont, the Germans, soon after 2 p.m., tried with two divisions to bring off a counter-stroke. Their waves spread over two miles and a half, and came on into the curtain and machine-gun fire. At one point they got a foothold on a small salient to the south of Chauffour Wood; but elsewhere they were thrown back after suffering great losses, particularly to the west of Poivre Hill and in the ravine between this hill and Haudromont Wood.

The German official news of Tuesday declared that a success had been won on the right bank of the Meuse by troops from Lower Saxony, who stormed the positions on the Steinbruch 700 yards to the south of the Haudromont Farm and on the ridge of hills to the north-west of Phiomont Farm, capturing forty-two officers, 1,646 unwounded soldiers, and fifty wounded men. "Their names", this report continues, "will be published in the 'Gazette des Ardennes'". The German authorities seem to realise that their bare official word carries very little weight.

It will be remembered that the King on 14 February sent a very heartening telegram to General Townshend at Kut, and that the telegram was not published for a long time. On Monday Mr. Asquith read to the House of Commons the General's reply, dated 17 February, and running as follows: "It is hard for me to express by words how profoundly touched and inspirited all ranks of my command have been by His Majesty's personal message. On their behalf and my own I desire to express to His Majesty that the knowledge we have gained the praise of our beloved Sovereign will be our sheet-anchor in this defence".

The news from Kut is far from good. On the night of 17-18 April a series of heavy counter-attacks were made by the Turks on the right bank of the Tigris. Our lines were forced back in places some 500 or 800 yards. Across the river General Goringe and his 13th Division are held up before the Sanna-i-yat defences.

On the evening of 14 April a raid on Constantinople was carried out by three British naval aeroplanes. Four officers took part in the raid: Squadron-Commander J. R. W. Smyth-Pigott, Flight-Lieutenant K. S. Savory, Flight Sub-Lieutenant R. S. W. Dickinson, and Flight Sub-Lieutenant I. H. W. Barnato. In their journey to Constantinople and back they covered 300 miles. At the start the weather was fine, but some wind and rain came, and then a thunderstorm broke around them. Bombs were dropped on the aeroplane hangars and on the Zeotunlik Powder Mills, which lie between Makiokeni, a suburb of Stamboul, and Stefano Point, about seven miles from the entrance of the Bosphorus. Another naval aeroplane visited Adrianople and attacked the railway station.

A well-informed correspondent sends us the following, which entirely bears out what has been strongly asserted more than once in the SATURDAY REVIEW: "A department of the War Office which has worked quietly but with supreme efficiency is that of the Master-General of Ordnance. It is not an exaggeration to say that the Army possesses no more capable or energetic an officer than General von Donop. The new Munition Department, with its Cabinet Minister and legion upon legion of employees, male and female, has undoubtedly done well; but it must be remembered that shells are not made in a day, and that probably nearly all those supplied up to date were under contracts made by the Master-General of Ordnance and not by the Minister of Munitions. As for the shortage of shells that existed, and for which some ignorant people have attempted to throw blame on General von Donop: it was in no way due to him, but to the

fact that a huge and deadly war was thrust upon us at a few hours' notice; and any fault, if fault there is, for the shortage of shells is due to the late Government, which, though warned, made no preparation to meet the lowering storm".

Mr. Hughes has received the Freedom of the City of London—a fine and ancient honour which has suffered less soil than many which are accounted more distinguished. To judge from his speeches on Tuesday, Mr. Hughes is much stronger and better in health. He spoke with great vigour and spirit of the duty which lies before the Empire; of the need for a virile spirit and for the recognition of a free man's first duty to serve his country in arms; of the great history of the British race and of a possibly greater future which lies on the further side of the war. His speech greatly pleased the Australian soldiers who heard it from the gallery of the Guildhall—as well it might. It breathed the spirit of Anzac and helped us to understand why the Australian armies came willingly and so far to fight for Britain.

Nothing further has happened to mar the progress of the Budget. If all measures necessary to the prosecution of the war could go through so easily as the new taxes we should not be going to press in the middle of a Cabinet crisis. Beyond a modification of the cider duties and the abolition of the travelling tax, the Budget stands virtually as introduced by Mr. McKenna. To the Budget itself no serious objection has been made in Parliament except the objection which applies to so much the Government undertakes. The Budget is not a good Budget. It is a *fainéant*, a colourless negative. It is true that it has not been seriously opposed. But that, in the circumstances, is about the very worst that can be said of it.

The tension curve between America and Germany again gives a rather high reading. The German Government has certainly shown little disposition of late to observe even the common amenities of diplomatic intercourse with President Wilson. Quite briefly the German Government has lied to the American Government over the "Sussex" affair, so bluntly and impudently lied that their lying is a provocation. Their truculent attitude makes the position of President Wilson very difficult, but the President, we may be sure, will not act in a temper. With Mexico and the "Sussex" correspondence upon his hands, President Wilson is most uneasily placed just now. Meantime, the Allies have received from five hundred Americans an address of sympathy and encouragement. The names of these five hundred are names we should wish to see—the names of Americans who stand high in reputation. The better educated Americans have never disguised their sympathy for the Allies.

The Home Secretary has sensibly decided that the Stop-the-War meeting fixed for to-morrow shall not take place. It is not reasonable to ask the police to protect such a meeting, and the meeting would certainly have needed protection. The Home Office have now relieved the police of a disagreeable and quite unnecessary duty. These stupid and treacherous proceedings would not have been tolerated for a moment by the public. The Government have done well in this matter, and it should be given full credit.

We notice that Mr. Hall Caine is eloquent in a letter in the "Times" this week about Bismarck, Roon, and others. Is this the same Mr. Hall Caine who, in August 1914, wrote a letter to the "Daily News" against Great Britain entering the war at all? The question is a fair one to ask, and the matter should be at once cleared up. Had Great Britain skulked away in August 1914 she would have broken her engagements to Belgium. She would have acted faithlessly towards France; and, in the end no doubt, she would have been destroyed, and have richly merited destruction.



## LEADING ARTICLES.

## THE GOLDEN AGE FOR MEDIOCRISTS.

TAKE care when God lets loose a great man in the world is an old warning. Whatever our dangers to-day, we are free from anything of that kind. Nothing like a great man, a genius of a man, is loose to-day; nor, as far as can be observed, is even in a cage. To take the case of this country: where is the genius, the dæmonic one, loose in politics or public life? Does anyone seriously suspect he is hiding and biding his time in the Cabinet of Twenty-Three to-day—and, if so, who is he, and what does he threaten us with, or make us take care of? But, of course, actually there is no one in the Cabinet to-day who answers in the least degree to the description—the great man or genius let loose by the gods; and most of us are gradually ceasing to be very sanguine of his appearance suddenly from a nimbus, even outside the charmed circle of the Twenty-Three. The fact that the elementary step in war—that is, the mobilisation of the youth and manhood of the nation—has not yet been accomplished, after the best part of two years of war and ghastly muddles at home proves clearly that there is no genius or great man of the front rank in or out of the Cabinet to-day: if there had been, he would long ago have smashed through the wire-pullers' entanglements that protect the funk-holes of mediocrists, Government and Opposition alike, and have settled the matter once and for all. Chatham would have sent the mediocrists and "National Unity" humbugs about their business a year ago, and have taken this A B C step in war organisation. Cæsar would have done it, Cromwell would have done it, and the younger Pitt would have done it, though in originality he was a lesser figure than these others. Probably Canning would have done it, for, if not a genius, at least he had gifts which compare with those of most of our leading statesmen to-day as the sun compares with a candle. We believe that the resolution of Castlereagh would have done it.

The truth has to be faced that, though we have a large number of able and pleasant gentlemen in and out of the Cabinet, and though the general average of, for example, the Twenty-Three is remarkably high—accomplished gentlemen of affairs and of the world, industrious, honourable and patriotic, and, in one direction and another, gifted—genius or greatness of the first rank does not appear at all.

We see the same thing outside politics. This is not only the golden age for mediocrists in the handling of public affairs; it is equally the golden age for mediocrists in the world of imagination. So keenly is this recognised that we find artists busily employed in trying to give the mediocrists who sit to them a singular or dæmonic appearance. The Minister of Munitions is by no means the only familiar example of the kind; there are plenty of others, in the world of imagination, as well as in the world of action, who are portrayed with, so to speak, their back hair very long and in the form of a flap. If some much talked of and written about and tremendously "clever" poet or Socialist, or dramatic celebrity of the moment has to be painted for public consumption, and in order to increase his sales it is necessary to give him an *outré* or a bizarre touch of the kind that will set the town staring and talking. He may be painted in green trousers and violet shoes, without a necktie; or if he is to be snapshotted for one of the illustrated Society papers, he should be caught as he walks along the streets in a brown study, without a hat, with both gloves on—for "clever" people must not carry gloves in the streets, but always wear them—and with arms and hands hanging limply by the side, and with no stick or umbrella—those sure marks of a commonplace man. Above all, it is necessary to make your celebrity look very *strong* by means of some coarse pencil or brush strokes: lay it on with a trowel or a house-painter's brush even—the eye of the public must be "arrested".

There is one man of genius in literature to-day, one

great man beyond all doubt, the author of "Tess of the D'Urbervilles", and of poems of a strange and wonderful quality: he is alone, and has been alone since the passing of Meredith and Swinburne. On the other hand, there is a wealth of lesser lights. There never has been a period richer in mediocrists in literature and in art. In public life, in the larger politics, there is the same phenomenon, except that here the one solitary man of genius, the dæmonic figure, is wanting; and, so far, the war gives no sign of his arrival on the scene. That is the reason why talk of a dictatorship or a despotism for the purposes of the war has been so much talk in the air, as we pointed out months ago.

The reasons for this absence of real greatness or genius are hard to fathom. Of course, there are plenty of explanations: the friends of one man will say his health is too uncertain, of another that he is too loyal to his friends, of a third that the parliamentary system or the machine is all against him, of a fourth that he has not had a good opportunity. But these are excuses, and not convincing. Genius in action forces its way despite health, friends, foes, systems, machines, and lack of opportunity. Genius makes its own opportunities: if we remember rightly, Napoleon denied that ever talent could be held back. The absence of genius in our counsels of State to-day is not a cheerful thing to consider. But it suits the book of those who prefer mannikin to Anakim; and who desiderate a moderate kind of carrying on of the war, to be followed in due course by a moderate sort of peace with a plausible settlement. The absence of genius is just the thing to suit those Whiggish minds among us who, on pressure and after a cool examination of all the facts and figures, will agree, for instance, to a moderate measure of protection or compulsion—not too much protection or compulsion, but just protection or compulsion enough for the immediate ends in view. It is just the thing that suits those apostles of "expediency" and "composure" at home who are earmarked for knighthood after the war, and who look forward to a return to the Plural Voting Bill and the completion of the modern Domesday. It also suits the book of the German. But the book it does not suit is that, unhappily, of the British Army and of the Empire Overseas.

## SUSTAINING THE FLEET.

WE print this week a letter from Mr. Raymond Blathwayt in which he urgently puts the case for a very comprehensive and vigorous air policy. This is a subject which has now for a long time filled the Press, has taken a lion's share of the platform, and engrossed to itself not a little share of Parliament. It is therefore full time that the public should put this very important matter into its right place and perspective. The truth is that, as a set-off to months of neglect and scrambling, the question of the air now tends to be overdone in certain quarters. Mr. Pemberton Billing is a useful gadfly, but we hesitate to find in him an inspired prophet who is going to reverse the main doctrine of centuries of English policy. The air is going to be an element of increasing importance—that is now accepted by most people. It is also agreed by all who are not merely mechanical supporters of the Government in being that this question, both before and after the formation of the Coalition, was miserably overlooked. The use and scope of the Zeppelins as raiders and spies was for several years overlooked by the Government. All this is admitted, and the public uneasiness as to the Government's air measures was pointed at in this REVIEW over six months ago—an uneasiness not allayed by the events which shortly followed.

But the air is not, and cannot be, so long as the war lasts, the decisive element in which we shall have to parry or lunge in the war with Germany. Possibly it is not the intention of Mr. Billing or of Mr. Blath-

way to suggest that the air should be first in our thoughts to-day. But it is to be remembered that the public tends to think most of what is filling the newspapers, and that when it reads every day concerning the supreme and vital importance of one particular thing, it is apt to forget other things less urgently advertised and discussed but not necessarily less important. The amount of vigour and attention in the public is not unlimited. It is a strictly finite quantity, and it is not safe to get very large proportions of this finite quantity dissipated upon minor issues. The question of the air, important as it is, is a much less vital issue than the question of the Navy.

It might well seem unnecessary to insist that a country which is fed by the sea, which could not strike a blow outside its own territory except by the sea, which could be starved, invaded, struck down as Belgium was struck down if it were not invincible by the sea—that for this country the Navy is so extremely important that everything else by comparison dwindles to a side issue. But we have lately read several speeches and letters from which we might almost gather that the Navy was merely a temporary expedient, to be scrapped by-and-by in favour of something more modern and effective. Other weapons there undoubtedly are, and they will increase in relative range and effectiveness as time goes on. But it is quite clear that England's power to-day, as wholly as in the days of Drake and Nelson, is a power which can only pass, only strike and sustain itself, by the sea. The repeated raidings of the Zeppelins have not altered that by a measurable hair. We may dream of other times and other needs. But there is yet no call to look away from the water when we desire to face the supreme question of England's life or death.

Is it therefore altogether wise to draw public attention so loudly and insistently away from this main matter of the Fleet to matters clearly less urgent? This last week, for example, we should have done better to follow Mr. Henderson to Glasgow and watch his dealings with the men in the Clyde valley than to devote quite so much thought to the proceedings of the new air school. For Mr. Henderson's mission touched the British Navy. It had to do with British ships whose building has been delayed by men of whom the public knows too little—men who should be kept full in the public eye, whose conduct should be perpetually watched and reported on continually. Less kindness from Government speakers, and more plain speaking from the Press in behalf of the nation at large, would improve matters in the Clyde valley. The stealthy, disloyal work of the Clyde agitators flourishes in the crepuscular region to which labour questions seem now, by common agreement, to be consigned. Bring these men and their treacherous work into the light. It would be well if we were to follow the movements of all disloyal agitators rather more closely than hitherto.

How many people have followed the proceedings of a conference of the delegates of the South Wales miners at Cardiff this week? This conference decided: (1) to agitate for the repeal of the Military Service Act; (2) to demand that the Clyde leaders be forgiven and taken back to their theatre of operations; (3) to refuse a pressing request of the Admiralty not to close down the collieries during the Easter holidays. The second resolution had a rider to the effect that in the case of the Government's refusal to reinstate the Clyde agitators, the delegates would advise a general strike.

Here, surely, are matters better worth attention than anything to do with the Zeppelins. The British Navy is dependent upon coal from Wales; but here are men who are ready to demand a general strike of the miners, and who have, in any case, refused to meet the Admiralty even half-way in a reasonable request. These men, moreover, seem to approve of the late agitation on the Clyde. There is no doubt at all that, if most unfortunately anything in the nature of the late agitation on the Clyde were really to spread in the shipyards, not only the traitors themselves, but the public, which knows so little of their circuitous ways, would very soon be feeling the pinch where the pinch is very apt to hurt.

They would be feeling the pinch, not in their purses or their politics, not in their sensitive souls or queasy brains, but full and square in the stomach. It is to the Clyde we mainly look to keep the fighting Fleet matchless upon the sea, and to make good the constant wear of our mercantile marine under those steady losses—losses recorded weekly in the Press, not always very prominently, but always clearly enough for those who are watching for them—losses from the German submarine campaign. Here is a danger to England far more serious than any danger from the air, because it touches England where alone she can be vitally maimed. It is not a danger which need in any way unnerve or fluster the country. It is watched by the most powerful weapon of sea-power ever forged in the history of the world. But it would be idle to deny that the submarines of Germany are the most deadly and effective weapon she has yet devised against us, and that we need to keep well in mind our necessity perpetually to repair and to renew our strength by sea. Whoever hinders or neglects that work is working for Germany.

We have repeatedly dealt with this question: but, for emphasis and clearness, it is worth summarising. It is true that a complete victory over Germany can only be secured by army force, by a land campaign. But we can only carry through such a campaign so long as the British Fleet remains invincible and dominates the seas overwhelmingly.

Further, if we lose that domination through villainous conduct of strikers, or through not making the Fleet stronger and stronger as time goes on, we lose, to a certainty, our liberty, our livelihood, and our Empire. With our Fleet beaten, with the mastery of the seas in the hands of the enemy, we could not secure even a muddled draw. We should then go clean under. The Navy has transcended all: does and will transcend all.

#### THE FOOLISH POSTERS.

WHO is not disgusted with the official insults to common sense which are still placarded on public buildings and on countless hoardings? They have been condemned by the Prime Minister because they "offend against the public taste", and not a word can be said in their favour. That the Government should have sanctioned this waste of paper, without editing the printed appeals for money and economy, is a provocation. It does harm because it invites ridicule and scorn. We should like to know how much the nation has paid to printers and to bill-stickers for the dishonour of being treated as a fool by this placard patriotism. If the appeals were clever they would still be out of keeping with the cool dignity that England should keep in war. But there is not a trace of cleverness in the recent and present placards. Instead, there is raw nonsense accompanied by make-believe and a shoddy commercialism. Not even the British soldier is let alone by this official cadging and badgering. He appears by name on one of the silliest placards and barbers with a civilian. The dialogue is worth preserving as a curiosity in financial touting:

"Civilian: How did you lose your arm, my lad?"

"Soldier: Fighting for you, sir."

"Civilian: I'm grateful to you, my lad."

"Soldier: How much are you grateful, sir?"

"Civilian: What do you mean?"

"Soldier: How much money have you lent your country?"

"Civilian: What has that to do with it?"

"Soldier: A lot. How much is one of your arms worth?"

"Civilian: I'd pay anything rather than lose an arm."

"Soldier: Very well. Put the price of your arm, or as much as you can afford, into Exchequer Bonds or War Savings Certificates, and lend your money to your country."

Why has the Government misused a wounded soldier? Why does it wish to raise money from the public in exchange for arms and legs lost in battle? Are civilians such curs that nothing less than a muti-



lated soldier can shame them into buying Exchequer Bonds? And who is responsible for this odious placard? Does any Department feel ashamed of itself? There is no talk of insomnia among the officials of any Department, and no committee or sub-committee is identified with this placarding nuisance. The responsibility rests indefinitely on the Government as a whole—and this although the Prime Minister has washed his hands of it.

Another placard rebukes bad form in women's dress. It is issued by the National Organising Committee for War Savings. What a very long title for a public indiscretion! The placard says not merely that elaboration and variety in dress are bad form in the present crisis, but that there is still *a large section of the community*, both among the rich and among the less well-to-do, who appear to make little or no difference in their mode of dress and life. If this charge were true—and true it certainly is not—no man would wish to see it placarded on public buildings and near public-houses. Are the women of England to be criticised from every hoarding in the Kingdom? Is this placard patriotism to put an end to all chivalry? Sixteen months ago women and girls were asked by placards to drive their men into the Army, so that the Government might talk about beauty in connection with the voluntary system. To-day they are abused as luxury-seekers in dress, and the well-to-do are singled out for special reference, as if to excite resentment against them from their poorer neighbours.

The placard forbids a good many articles of dress—luxurious hats, boots, shoes, gloves, veils, even stockings, but no other underclothing; and women of an educated time are told with smug authority that "new clothes should be bought only when absolutely necessary", and that they "should be durable and suitable for all occasions". No remark is made on the price of handkerchiefs, and the increased prices for laundry work are forgotten. "It is essential, not only that money should be saved, but that labour employed in the clothing trades should be set free." For what purpose? This tag about setting labour free is a favourite one in placard patriotism. It implies that about 50 per cent. of the shops in the United Kingdom ought to be shut up by economy; and then, by some means not stated, profitable work would be found for all the tradesmen and their assistants. Tailors would make aeroplanes and butchers would make bombs; scores of big shops in every town would be turned into munition factories without machinery; and all would be well. Yet the economists who talk about setting labour free from an indefinite number of shops never show any eagerness to drill 18-pounder shell blanks or to rivet base plugs on H.E. shell bodies. They talk profusely. Such is the labour of to-day's economists, both lay and professional. And it occupies months of time and wastes a great deal of paper.

There is a coy little poster that smiles in the blandest manner, like one of those universal friends who borrow half-crowns and treat them as bad investments. Not that there is any harm in this coy little poster. "£1 for 15/6", it says persuasively. "If you cannot fight—lend your money. Go to the Post Office to-day". What brevity and what riches! If advertisements published by the State must plead for cash, let the appeals be brief—and attractive.

Then there is the placard labelled "Don't", and the Government ought to choose this label as a fitting motto for placard patriotism. Nothing could be more foolish than the "Don't" attack on good sense. "Don't buy new clothes needlessly. Don't be ashamed of wearing old clothes in war time." Tailors have known for twenty months that few laymen buy clothes until they are gazetted. The non-military tailors have had a bad time, but we hope that a reaction against the injustice of this placard will send them some work. It is always against dress, and seldom against food, that these official busybodies make their assaults. Yet the decently dressed persons in the streets are often refugees and other foreign visitors.

"Don't keep more servants than you really need" is another stroke of superlative wisdom. Will the Government explain to a great many households with children how a maid is to be kept for a month or so? The national work that servants want to do is in railway stations, in munition factories, and in other unusual places, that seem at a distance to be charmingly spectacular. There is supposed to be no heroism in domestic service, because it is work for which most women should be fitted.

Placard patriotism has no fun at all, unlike the old town-crier with his bell and story. Besides, it causes foreigners to say that the English people are losing touch with their old character and becoming the most fussy people in Europe. The placards are all unseemly, and we hope soon to see them plastered over by the official bill-sticker. They belong to the noisy and futile half-measures into which the Government has poured torrents of words. Even one of the Radical papers has declared that the Coalition suffers from "a certain dullness and lethargy of which the lack of foresight and control are merely effects . . . to put it more brutally, there have been several blunders which ought to have been avoided and which point to the lack of a controlling vision and guiding hand operating throughout the field of war". What the Coalition needs urgently is the whip of public anger. Its placard patriotism and its endless balancing "offend against the public taste" and humiliate the Empire.

## THE GREAT WAR.

APPRECIATION (No 90) BY VIEILLE MOUSTACHE.

THE LAST STEP OUT OF HELL(ES).

THE courage of responsibility and the wish to bear it are rare gifts, but are indispensable to a general. It is more necessary to the leaders in war of our own times than in the past, for as armies have increased in dimensions beyond all imagination, so have the issues that are dependent upon their movements and actions. The art of the commander consists in determining with precision on the actual circumstances presented to him from the lights thrown upon a situation from many quarters. He must have a brain clear enough to grasp the facts and a mind sufficiently balanced to hold the scales between the teaching of theories and the presentation of facts. He must possess an understanding which even in a certain obscurity can discern some traces of inner light which lead to the truth. The French have a happy word for this great military ability to give a rapid and correct decision, which they define by the term "Coup d'œil." The expression, no doubt, is more in its place in the field of tactics; still it must not be wanting in strategy, inasmuch as in the latter rapid decisions are often equally necessary. The courage to follow the light, however faint, which has penetrated a maze of difficulties is proof of the spirit of resolution in a commander. Mere intelligence is not courage, for we often see the cleverest of people deficient in resolution. There are persons who possess the keenest perception for the most difficult problems, who are also not fearful of responsibility, and yet in cases of difficulty cannot come to a decision. Their courage and their sagacity operate independently of each other; they decline to work together, and on that account do not produce a resolution as a result. War, the great searcher after true courage, probes the soul of man and lays bare to fellowmen the bedrock of true character. There are many instances of men who have shown the greatest resolution in an inferior rank and have lost it in a higher position. A resolve that dictates to a soldier that he must sacrifice all his soul's thirst for honour and renown for the good of his country and its cause, when that country asks of him an honest opinion, is proof of the tenacity of his conviction and of his strength of character.

The despatch of 6 March 1916 from General Sir

Charles Monro, which records his report on the military situation on the Gallipoli peninsula and the desirability of a continuation of operations bears upon its face the stamp of a soldier. Upon the shoulders of Sir C. Monro was the responsibility of advising the Cabinet on the question. It was as well that the problem whether to continue operations, remain in position or withdraw from the peninsula was placed in the hands of a man of character, a man well versed in the methods of modern war gained by months of experience in high command. The report is a model of conciseness and is well summed up in a sentence: "The force, in short, held a line possessing every possible military defect." We know too well the story of the deplorable irresolution and lack of spirit for a determined effort which pervaded the mind or minds of those originally responsible for the whole design of the operations for the capture of the sea route to Stamboul. We know now that troops were dribbled into the strategic area and at such long intervals of time that they afforded an enemy every opportunity of anticipating fresh movements. Except for the splendid heroism of our seamen and soldiers, as narrated by a brilliant penman-general in his despatches, telling of men who struggled for months against unheard of difficulties, the story of the attempt for Gallipoli had better be blotted out of our Naval and Military records: it is but the history of a complete failure by sea and land. There is much to learn from the experiences of failure. There is still more to learn from the reason of the failure. To be of any value to our future generations of seamen and landmen the story of the Dardanelles from start to finish should be unravelled with all its lights and shades, its ups and downs, its secrets of hesitations, delays, maladministration, shortcomings in diplomacy, and the thousand and one items which make up the sum total that spells failure. That the path to anticipated victory was anything but smooth is evidenced in the touching final words of Sir Ian Hamilton's despatch where, in bidding a "farewell tribute to dear comrades", he writes: "Our progress was constant, and if it was painfully slow—they know the truth". Let us then some day have the truth laid bare with all honesty of purpose to teach to the sons of a Sea Power the lessons learnt by their fathers in the school of adversity. It was by this very process that our brave Ally in France has taught himself to be the equal if not the superior of the foe that trod his armies and his nation underfoot in the terrible days of 1870. France is now reaping the reward of the study of her failure as written in her official account which lays threadbare the story of her great débâcle.

The shadow of a great cloud that hung over our operations in the Dardanelles appeared to lift from the moment of the arrival of the new commander. It was not that new designs of operations of an offensive nature were initiated, but conditions improved, sickness abated, spirits and moral revived. Some men are born under more lucky stars than others. Hesitation in home councils delayed the verdict for withdrawal to an extent which imperilled success, the elements being one factor likely to spell life or death to thousands in a retirement where active and timely co-operation of seamen and soldier was imperative. One terrible experience of a blizzard, which took a heavy toll of death and sickness, foreshadowed what delay might cost. The record of the evacuation is told in simple straightforward language in the despatch, and will for ever remain as a classic in the principles which should guide such operations. The story outlines the fine work done by staffs and leaders both afloat and ashore. Suvla and Anzac, which were evacuated simultaneously, were abandoned without a hitch, and with no loss of life and of very little material. The trial to come at Helles called for special methods of imposition on the enemy, and a period arrived when all the intellect and art of the deceiver was called into play, and every man became his own general at the game. The Turks having been thoroughly hoodwinked at the evacuation of Suvla Bay and Anzac, needless to say, were very much on the

alert to frustrate a repetition of the effort at the toe of the peninsula. In order to throw dust in their eyes, an eye-witness tells the story of how orders for an offensive against Krithia were issued. This to prepare the enemy for an increased amount of movement on the beaches. As orders of this nature soon find their way across the trench lines, it apparently had its effect, for renewed activity of hostile airmen was apparent, and the bombardment of the beaches from both the Achi Babi and the Asiatic positions was redoubled. One story records that a tin was fired into our trenches within which was the message, "We know that you are going—good luck and bon voyage". The difficulty throughout was naturally to prevent the enemy noticing the gradual reduction in the numbers of guns, wagons, stores, horses, and men. For this purpose the supply of lighters was insufficient to grapple with the rapidly accumulating piles of material that lay upon the beaches. Weather and gales added to this trouble, and for several nights made loading up impossible. As the old gun positions were evacuated, the sites which the weapons had occupied were carefully screened, one gun alone being left to perform the duties of a battery and firing daily the normal number of rounds of the full unit. The positions that had been occupied by the reserves were similarly screened, and squads of men told off to light the usual camp fires day and night, as when fully garrisoned. The greater part of the infantry remained to the last, and fortunately so, as on the 7th January the Turks made a violent attempt to thrust the whole force into the sea under cover of a very heavy bombardment from all points. The shortage of water transport and lighters necessitated provision being made for the destruction of the accumulated stores, and for this purpose a huge excavation was made in the cliffs in order to baffle the airmen of the intent of evacuation until the last moment possible. The infantry, who held thinly the fringe of the trench line were now to prove their "slimness". For about four or five days they had "periods of silence" in the trench lines day and night, the purpose being to allow no fire or bombing, and thus oblige the enemy to discover for himself the existence of his opponents. It was on the 7th January that they found our men very much "at home", and were forced to retire with heavy loss from an attempted visit. Excellent devices were put into practice to keep up the deception to the last. Our men had not forgotten a few tricks learnt in South Africa. To the rearguard parties was left the duty of putting several devices into execution, so that intermittent firing went on even when the trench line had been evacuated. As the crowded motor barges dribbled the men and guns in successive journeys to the transports, the great final act in the drama was being prepared. The accumulated tons of ammunition, stores, carriages, etc., piled above the magazine that had been tunnelled in the cliff, were duly deluged with oil and petrol. The time-table had been kept to the minute in spite of enormous difficulties of wind and weather. At four a.m. on the morning of the 9th January a terrific explosion announced to the Turks that the Allied Expeditionary Force had bid adieu to the shores of the Gallipoli Peninsula. It had cost us thousands to enter the jaws of Hell on the 25th of April 1915. On the dawn of 9th January 1916 we left it with impunity. But what a toll of life did not the Demon of War demand for such brief tenancy!

## MIDDLE ARTICLES.

### GERMAN GENERALS.—II.

By MAJOR-GENERAL SIR ALFRED E. TURNER.

THE great War Lord would doubtless be surprised if told that he was no general in the sense of a qualified leader of an army. He has been all his life puffed up by the incense of flattery with which his sycophantic toadies have heaped his shrine of luxury and pride, adulators who have assured him that he was endowed with all the military talents of Frederick the Great, which he possessed intuitively, and which,



with the aid of Krupp, would give him world dominion and a position in comparison with which that of Alexander the Great was as chaff against wheat. "Jeder Zoll ein Soldat", as one of his flatterers-in-chief, Rudolf Martin, described him in his well-known brochure "Kaiser Wilhelm II. und König Edward VII.", in which he attributed every kingly virtue to his master and every possible failing to our King. No wonder this sort of base and servile flattery turned the head of a man who is clearly, as Caligula was described, "an epileptic with highly developed criminal instincts". How he was regarded by some of those around him we may gather from the scene which followed his celebrated speech, the notes and context of which were given by Mr. William Le Queux to the late Government in 1908, but which, of course, they disregarded, though it has turned out to be a statement of what we know now to have been the Kaiser's aims and manner of attaining them. When he had finished his bombastic and silly oration, we are told that "an old white-headed general, von K—, even knelt before His Majesty to kiss the hand that was gracefully extended to him", and with deep emotion he cried: "It is truly the voice of God that has spoken out of Your Majesty! God has chosen Your Imperial Majesty as His worthy instrument to destroy this nightmare of British supremacy at sea, from which Germany has suffered all these years—and God's will be done!" How this reminds one of King Herod's speech and the cries that followed it: "It is the voice of a god and not of a man!" What will posterity say of a British Government to whom a copy of this speech was given, who were warned four years later by Lord Haldane, and who knew that in 1913 a gigantic super-tax of £50,000,000 was levied solely for war purposes, and yet did nothing to meet the coming storm!

Certain German officers have told me confidentially what they thought of the War Lord as a general: they dreaded his commanding at manoeuvres, his only idea being to make a spectacular effect by hurling huge masses of infantry, and even cavalry, against strong and unshaken positions. I know of two generals who were courageous enough to tell him what they thought of him, von Bissing and von Haeseler. The Kaiser is a man of uncontrollable impulse, the last quality that makes a leader of men, as these little incidents will show, unimportant as they are. When the Kaiser visited our King in 1907 he stayed at Windsor and came to London frequently to receive deputations. On one occasion the late Duke of Argyll, as president, Lord Roberts and myself, as vice-presidents, with other members of the Anglo-German Friendship Society, went to the German Embassy, as a small deputation, to pay the respects of the Society to the Kaiser, and to tell him, in so many words, how we esteemed him as an angel of peace! He was very gracious, and told us how he knew of and valued our efforts to promote good relations between the two empires, and nothing should induce him to go to war, especially with England. He spoke with each of us and then received a deputation of the German Reserve Officers' Club in London; he spoke to each of them, and asked them one and all the same question, namely, what their profession in London was. One well-known cavalry reserve officer, a man greatly liked and esteemed over here, so much so that he was the master of a well-known pack of foxhounds in the south of England, replied to the Kaiser's question that he was a Master of Foxhounds. The War Lord, who, like all Germans, has no sense of humour, thought that the officer had dared to make a joke, gave a snort, darted a furious glance of wrath at the luckless being and turned his august back on him. Little did I think that a day or two later I was to receive similar fiery beams of anger from the eyes of the All Highest. For several years before the war I was a member of the German Athenæum Club, of which we have heard much of late, the membership of which I, in common, no doubt, with all the English members and the naturalised Germans who were true to the country of their adop-

tion, resigned. A day or two after the reception at the Embassy I was asked by the committee of the Club to attend to receive the Kaiser, who was going to visit us there. The members were ranged across the room, and each one was introduced by the German Ambassador to His Imperial Majesty. When he arrived opposite me he started as if he had seen an obnoxious reptile, darted glances of anger from his eyes, "like Mars, to threaten and command," and was passing on, when the Ambassador—knowing he knew me well—told him who I was. The result was another glance of fury—and a dead cut. Till the Kaiser was unmasked as a monster and hypocrite in 1914 I had no idea what those ebullitions of anger meant. It is now not to be doubted that the All Highest was not aware that any hated Britisher was a member of the Club, and that he was prevented by my presence from making a speech to the Germans there assembled, in which, no doubt, he would have told them to prepare for the day when he would arrive in London with his army as a conqueror. Later I heard that he had been invited to dine at the Club, and that he only accepted on the condition that Germans alone should be present. No notice of this dinner was sent to the English members, and the Kaiser, no doubt, was able to give full instructions and advice to his faithful subjects in London. This Club is now a British Services Club, and a determined attempt to oust them was made by the German Athenæum Club Company. The mortgage on the Club of £15,000 was apparently paid off by wealthy Germans in London, including Privy Counsellors who, though German born, are still members of that high and august body: which shows that the divine precept, "Love your enemies", still exists among a small minority of our countrymen. No wonder our Allies gasp in astonishment at such proceedings, and ask whether we really feel that we are not only at war, but at grips with a deadly, ruthless, cruel enemy, who glories in the murder of women and children and the destruction of everything that comes within his grasp. Half-fighting with such foes is far from playing the game.

The small incidents I have related show that the All Highest is uncontrollable when annoyed, that he is without *savoir vivre*; for I was one of his hosts at the Club. He is generalissimo of not only Germany, but of all the armies of the Central Powers, but he is no general in the quality sense of the word, and his presence in the field is a greater asset to his enemies than to his friends.

In my next article I shall speak of men who are, or have been, really capable leaders of men, such as von Haeseler, von Bissing, von Hindenburg, von Bülow, and others, with whom I have come in contact.

#### "THE MAGIC FLUTE."

By Πυρρός.

THE only real excuse for "The Magic Flute" is that it is really magic. Mozart has seen to that. Why does not every musician admit as much, and once for all confess that, apart from the fact that it contains some of the most heavenly music of a musician who wrote for the angels, "The Magic Flute" is the worst opera that ever was put together? There have been worse librettists than Schikaneder. But the worst of them have usually known their own minds, and when they set out to do something cheap, they did at least succeed. But Schikaneder has not even done what he intended to do. Half-way through the opera he turns the chief villain into a holy priest and gives to his harmless fairy-tale a masonic, hieratic twist in which sense, humour, and sequence are hopelessly lost. It was this sort of thing which turned Wagner into a Wagnerian.

The rule about libretti is a simple one. They must be neither too good nor too bad for their business. It is difficult to say which is worst—a libretto which is good enough to be judged on its literary merits, or a



libretto which is so bad that it aggressively challenges incredulity and derision. In either case the fault, so far as opera is concerned, is the same. Whether a libretto aggressively claims our attention either by its literary excellence or by its dramatic absurdity, it equally diverts us from the music, and music is the beginning and the end of opera. Everyone now admits that a very bad libretto, by causing merriment in the wrong place, or by worrying an audience with riddles, or in any of the dozen ways in which the libretto of "The Magic Flute" happens to be bad—everyone admits that such a libretto distinctly handicaps the musician. It handicaps him because, by being extravagantly and outrageously ridiculous or false or inconsequent, it attracts attention. Instead of listening to the Queen of Night, we cannot help noticing that the Queen of Night, who behaves like a justifiably anxious mother in the first act, begins thereafter quite unaccountably to behave like an evil spirit. This really does interfere at times with our fixed intention to do nothing but listen to Mozart, and this, therefore, is bad for the opera. It is less universally admitted—it is hardly admitted at all just at present—that, so far as Mozart is concerned, it would be equally disastrous if "The Magic Flute" had been as much too good a libretto as it is, on the contrary, too bad. Suppose, for example, that Milton had written the libretto—either as the fairy story with which Schikaneder began, or as the moral pilgrimage with which he concluded. Mozart might then have fared even worse than he fares with Schikaneder. People who went to his opera would have to make up their minds which they were going to hear—Milton or Mozart. They could not possibly do justice to both of them at a single sitting. Either Milton or Mozart, or some part of each of them, would be wasted, according as the audience were literary or musical, or a little bit of both.

The best thing that can happen to a librettist is that he should be inconspicuous. His business is simply to define the task which the musician has set himself and then to keep as much as possible out of the way. So long as he makes it quite clear that his people are in love, or feeling religious, or being happy, or frightened, or surprised, it does not greatly matter how he does it. He can leave all the refinements to the musician and be entirely satisfied with himself so long as he keeps well upon the safe side of an altogether inhuman silliness. Unhappily, in "The Magic Flute" he crosses the line of safety, and the bad effect of this upon the music was not infrequently illustrated at the Aldwych Theatre the other night, when a thoroughly musical audience, at a time when they ought to have been listening with all their ears, were neighing with irrepressible laughter. Where Schikaneder should have been simply indicating and defining what Mozart was about, he intruded with antics of his own.

Mozart was a born dramatic genius in his music—much nearer in this to Wagner than to Beethoven. Where Beethoven's music is the expression of one giant personality, Mozart can fling himself into diverse characters and find appropriate music for all of them. Unfortunately he modestly assumed that his librettists, so far as the mere hack-work of playwriting was concerned, could be trusted to save him the trouble of going into the cardboard and limelight business in which Wagner, his dramatic successor, so childishly delighted. Mozart just took over his libretti, and without looking at them as a whole, proceeded to give to the characters and moments they presented and defined for him a peerless musical expression—an expression as creatively dramatic as any music which has ever been written for the theatre. He finds Papageno in the "book" as a clumsy grotesque, but leaves him a fairy, bird-like creature, as real to the imagination as Ariel. Shut your eyes and close your ears to the nonsense Papageno or Zarastro is talking and you are transported into a region sometimes not far from Prospero's island; at other times within call of the wood where Comus in vain was a sorcerer. Mozart, being a dramatist in music, has strung together in "The Magic Flute" an exquisite series of dramatic lyrics. It is

Schikaneder's fault that they do not always fit. Mozart has thrown his whole soul into each moment and character as he received it from his librettist. Only one character has entirely baffled him, as well it might. He obviously despaired of making anything at all of the Queen of Night, so he just sets her some musical exercises, thereby getting rid of her as soon as he conveniently can. All the other characters are operatically alive, and, what is also important, but not necessarily the same thing, they are continually singing the loveliest music.

Sir Thomas Beecham's production of the opera last Saturday was very thorough and precise. The opera is mounted with simple dignity. The scenery does not call attention to itself. It observes the golden rule which the libretto so disastrously neglects. It is adequate, which is all that operatic scenery should be. The singing was good enough to show that we can do very well without excessive importation from abroad. Mr. Robert Radford as Zarastro, and Mr. Frederick Ralaw as Papageno deservedly claimed the highest honours—Mr. Radford because he has a real bass voice, and Mr. Ralaw because he is a clever actor as well as an accomplished singer. Zarastro's music—which is music as profoundly religious as anything in "Parsifal", and is incomparably cleaner and more masculine—was the most finely rendered of the whole opera. Mr. Ralaw's lightly love-lorn complaining for a mate came next, and the birdlike duet he sang with Miss Olive Townend as Papagena. The Queen of Night was not so happy, but for this Miss Sylvia Nelis is hardly to blame. The part is only for leading ladies who want to prove triumphantly that they have unusual vocal powers, and Miss Nelis is too good a musician to be nothing more than a voice. Miss Miriam Licette was not well suited as Pamina. Her notes were not certain or pure enough for the part. Mr. Maurice D'Oisly's Tamino was creditable, but not inspired. His conception and execution were sound and solid, but high ecstasy and adventurous errantry go to the making of Tamino, and these things, to say the least, were not exactly obtrusive in Mr. D'Oisly's reading.

## SHAKESPEARE AND THE ELEMENTS.

By FRANCES CHESTERMAN.

### I.

STUDENTS of Shakespeare of whatever bent acknowledge in Sir Sidney Lee's work a gain of singular value. As rewritten and enlarged it has an exhaustive summary of all material that has deserved consideration since, in 1898, his original "Life of Shakespeare" appeared. Probably we have between its covers all facts that shall ever be adduced and attested of the poet's life. And that is much. The task, the great undertaking of the author, is fulfilled to the extreme limits of a scope that stops only short of æsthetic criticism. "Shakespearean literature", he affirms in the first Preface, "as far as it is known to me still lacks a book that shall supply within a brief compass an exhaustive and well-arranged statement of the facts of Shakespeare's career, achievement and reputation, that shall reduce conjecture to the smallest dimensions consistent with coherence, and shall give verifiable references to all the original sources of information." In accordance, then, with the plan of the author, we become possessors of a "guide book to Shakespeare's life and work" that emphatically is, "within its limits, complete and trustworthy".

There remains, however, a field known to the students of past wisdom that should engage the labours of devout Shakespeareans. It is time that they concern themselves with the now obsolete science, superstitions, and beliefs that impressed the poet's mind in youth, moulded his thought, dictated his principal studies, and influenced all his work. None indeed has carried into these matters the laborious research and exact method that stamps Sir Sidney Lee's statement of the "duly attested facts and dates" of the master's career. English critics, and German no less, have

wandered merely in the outer court of Shakespeare's school of art. Hypothesis and conjecture have served their turn. The putting forth of original theories has apparently lulled the literary conscience, and interpretation has come short through lack of enterprise to recover the system by which the poet framed men. None has penetrated the inmost sanctuary where he compounded bodies out of the four elements, the four humours, the corporal spirits and the temperaments. No dramatist after him has stood on his platform demonstrating as naturalist the several constitutions and their tendencies, as psychologist the action and reaction of body and soul one upon another, as pathologist the Diagnostics and Ætiology of Hippocrates and Galen wherever his purpose should be served.

In a passage in the "Life" dealing with "philosophical conceits" a suggestion occurs that Shakespeare may have found in the "Ovidian quarry" a "pseudo-scientific theory on which he meditates in the Sonnets xlv. and xlv. the notion that man is an amalgam of the four elements: earth, water, air, and fire". Nothing could more strongly support our present contention that the closest scholars, the most sincere Shakespeareans, have not yet examined the cosmic philosophy that was current knowledge, scientific knowledge, and to some extent popular knowledge in Shakespeare's age. "That superstition", pursues Sir Sidney Lee in regard to the theory of elements, "was already a veteran theme of the sonneteers at home and abroad, and was accessible to him (Shakespeare) in many places outside Ovid's pages." Naturally that which was taught of philosophy in former times found utterance by the poets, just as modern teaching is reiterated by metaphysical poets to-day. Shakespeare uttered the wisdom of his time. Hard, most hard, had it been for schoolman, or empiric, before the seventeenth century, to break away from the Hippocratic and Aristotelian doctrines of physics, psychology, and pathology, or to withdraw in thought from their fundamental thesis of the participation of the "little frame of man's body" in the qualities and quantities of the universal.

Shakespeare was naturalist of naturalists. His understanding and handling of the doctrines of his day are both deeper and more facile than can be seen elsewhere. And of this Hamlet gives convincing proof. "Tamberlaine" and "The Lover's Melancholy", whilst exhibiting its terms, are poorer in letter and spirit of the old philosophy. Consider Hamlet in the light in which Sir James Crichton-Browne once placed the portrayal. "Shakespeare", confessed the great alienist, "had somehow attained to a singularly just comprehension of several varieties of mental derangement, and had presented us with pictures of them of remarkable scientific accuracy." The students of Hippocrates and Galen alone, it would seem, "have nothing" with the word "somehow", since, knowing well the sources of Shakespeare's knowledge, they perceive that the mind that built up the constitution of Hamlet was utterly imbued with the doctrine of Elements, Humours, Temperaments.

It must be regretted that the earliest editors entered on their task in an age already bankrupt of the former doctrine, so that whilst criticising the Shakespearean images moulded upon its principles they themselves were empty, almost, of any knowledge of the same. The "Variorum" in this respect makes curious reading. With one consent the "guardians and trustees" of the poet advanced a theory of "intuition" to account for the extraordinary "integrity of his forms", yet never ceased to urge upon each other the duty of becoming "well versed in the history and manners of their author's age". "Much knowledge", averred Dr. Johnson, "is scattered over his (Shakespeare's) works . . . but it is often such knowledge as books did not supply." Dryden found him "naturally learned; he needed not the spectacles of books to read Nature; he looked inward and found her there". Pope declared: "He is not so much an imitator as an instrument of Nature; and it is not so just to say that he speaks from her as that she speaks

through him . . . a man of no education . . . he seems to be the only author that gives ground for a very new opinion, that the philosopher, and even the man of the world, may be *born* as well as the poet". Such pronouncements, evasive as they are, have small value. Singular endowments of nature Shakespeare undoubtedly possessed—a clear insight, quick apprehension, and solid judgment; but beyond these are manifest the signs of a positive education. This Sir Sidney Lee establishes as plain matter of fact, and we are enabled through his labours to view the poet as scholar in "a well equipped public school", getting withal "a taste of academic culture", if scarcely proceeding to the pass of "exact scholarship". The comprehensive untutored wisdom that has been attributed to him would seem preternatural. It is comparable with that only which a second century tradition relates of Christ Jesus in the dispute in the Temple. "Hast thou read books?" asked a principal Rabbi, and Jesus answered "He had read both books and the things which were contained in books".

The first Gospel of the infancy of Jesus Christ (translated and published in England in 1697) contains, further, a remarkable statement by the Divine Master of the Hippocratic doctrine that was the knowledge no less of Shakespeare than of Ovid. It proceeds (chap. xxi., v. 11, 12): "A philosopher well skilled in physic and natural philosophy asked Him (Jesus) whether He had studied physics? He replied and explained to him. . .

14. The powers of the body, its humours and their effects.
15. Also the number of its members and bones, veins, arteries, and nerves.
16. The several constitutions of body, hot and dry, cold and moist, and the tendencies of them.
17. How the soul operated upon the body.
18. What its various sensations and faculties were.
19. The faculty of speaking, anger, desire.
20. And, lastly, the manner of its composition and dissolution."

Until the opening of the seventeenth century scarce any change might be observed in the cosmic doctrine. Yet change was near. Less than fifty years later Sir Kenelm Digby, one of its more devoted scholars and demonstrators, was writing treatises on the "Nature of Bodies" and "The Nature of Man's Soule" for the better grounding of his son in the ancient philosophic truth. The teaching in the Universities, he complained, was become subversive or loose and superficial. I suggest that this, the lost learning that informs Shakespeare's work and alone elucidates his "obscurities", should succeed Sir Sidney Lee's work as just matter for systematic research. To the lover, at least, of antique thought Shakespeare's assimilation of the elements theory and its effect upon his genius seems better worthy of consideration and study than the problems relating to personal history in the Sonnets. The former admits of final satisfaction, the latter through no labour can be resolved.

#### MY SON.

HERE is his little cambric frock  
That I laid by in lavender so sweet,  
And here his tiny shoe and sock,  
I made with loving care for his dear feet.

I fold the frock across my breast,  
And in imagination, ah, my sweet,  
Once more I hush my babe to rest,  
And once again I warm those little feet.

Where do those strong young feet now stand?  
In flooded trench, half numb to cold or pain,  
Or marching through the desert sand  
To some dread place that they may never gain.

God guide him and his men to-day,  
Though death may lurk in any tree or hill,  
His brave young spirit is their stay,  
Trusting in that they'll follow where he will.



They love him for his tender heart  
When poverty or sorrow asks his aid,  
But he must see each do his part—  
Of cowardice alone he is afraid.

I ask no honours on the field,  
That other men have won as brave as he,  
I only pray that God may shield  
My son, and bring him safely back to me.

ADA TYRRELL.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

### "DELEND A EST CARTHAGO."

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

SIR,—If ever there existed in modern times the pressing necessity not only to recall but to put in force to the very letter these memorable words, making, however, the requisite change of Carthage to Germany, no more urgent moment has as yet presented itself to the civilised world. The adopted but too insignificant term "frightfulness" conveys the idea of an outrageous action, but only inadequately can be named to suggest the methods adopted by the enemy aircraft and the dastardly use of liquid fire. The most appropriate term is the world-wide verdict of "Wilful Murder", to which base level of human passion the enemy has reduced itself as a lasting blot upon the page of history.

The glory of modern warfare, however, is to conquer and improve, and, if the idea savours not too much of the "Utopian", it is devoutly to be hoped that these perpetrators of inexcusable horrors will find themselves deprived of any European position both as regards the possession of an army or navy. In such an event the art of ruling a nation otherwise than by the "patriotism of mutilation" may yet dawn upon the intellects of those set in authority, and international law be held in equal respect as the civil law. The Machiavellian education of a prince should be consigned to the limbo of the past.

The poet Milton, whose inspired lyre has sung of the wars in heaven and of the infernal machines contrived by Satan, has handed down to us in "Paradise Regained" the following reflections:

"They err who count it glorious to subdue  
By conquest far and wide, to overrun  
Large countries and in field great battles win,  
Great cities by assault: what do these worthies,  
But rob and spoil, burn, slaughter and enslave  
Peaceable nations neighbouring or remote,  
Made captive, yet deserving freedom more  
Than those their conquerors, who leave behind  
Nothing but ruin wheresoe'er they rove,  
And all the flourishing works of peace destroy.  
Then swell with pride, and must be titled gods,  
Great benefactors of mankind, deliverers,  
Till conqueror Death discover THEM scarce men,  
Rolling in brutish vices and deform'd,  
Violent or shameful death their due reward.  
But if there be in glory aught of good,  
It may by means far different be attain'd  
Without ambition, war or violence:  
By deeds of peace, by wisdom eminent,  
By patience, temperance."

Meanwhile, Horace bids us remember:

"Dulce et decorum est pro patriâ mori:  
Mors et fugacem persequitur virum,  
Nec parcat imbellis juvenatæ  
Poplitibus, timidoque tergo".

Yours, etc.,

OSBORNE ALDIS.

### SI VIS PACEM, PARA BELLUM.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

SIR,—There are certain occupations which are actually most useful when those who are engaged in them are doing nothing. The Fire Brigade and

the Police are conspicuous examples. We owe it to the Fire Brigade that we do not live in perpetual fear of being burned in our beds; we owe it to the constable that we go about our business without constant dread of the pickpocket or the burglar. The medical profession is another such paradox—nobody wants to have a doctor prescribing medicine at all times, or feeling one's pulse day after day; yet if the doctor were not at hand when required we should not know what to do in case of illness or accident. All these things are so well known that to put them into words is to be guilty of uttering commonplace and truism; yet there is one branch of public affairs in which we habitually ignore this "truism", and in which some of us go so far as to behave as though it were a demonstrated falsehood. For nearly a century we have acted as if the Army were wholly superfluous and the Navy almost unnecessary. It required the present war to awake most of us from a dream of security, and there are even now some who would raise the cry of Retrenchment, although Peace has been broken, and Reform seems likely to take unexpected shapes.

Nevertheless, while admitting all this, and while proposing to take action upon the admission, we must beware lest we rashly run into the opposite extreme. If we feel that we must adopt Compulsory Service in order to provide a force for National Defence, we must never forget that Militarism is the enemy, and that Militarism is based on Conscription. If we are forced to adopt a measure of Protection, because we must have home-grown and home-manufactured supplies, lest we be starved by blockade or crippled by the shortage of raw material, we must never forget the presumption in favour of Free Trade. If we are forced to put pressure on Labour by forbidding combinations which inflict injury on the State or on the public, we must never forget that the presumption is in favour of Freedom, and that cause must be shown for every restriction and every infringement of the primary rights of citizenship. Only the extremest emergency can justify the limitation of Freedom, because Freedom is itself a primary condition of the association we call the State. "Freedom of Primitive Man" is an unmeaning form of words—it is not until human beings come into some sort of association that one person can exercise restraint over another, so that Freedom can only be predicated of Man in Society. At the same time, the absence of coercion of men by other men has been found to be an essential condition of social well-being, and this absence of coercion is what we call Freedom. Man in Society is under a perpetual temptation to coerce his fellow-man, and the one coerced is in like manner tempted to resist. The experience of ages proves that successful resistance brings about an improved state of things for all sorts and conditions of men, though rulers and ruling classes are apt to fight against the improvement; and those who are ruled are occasionally slow to perceive it and take advantage of it. Not only so, but from time to time a reaction sets in, and even men who have long enjoyed freedom are found willing, for the sake of some immediate gain, to submit to restraint which they may not find it easy to shake off when they fain would. I fear that this state of mind may take possession of some of us. National Service may degenerate into Militarism—it has done so in Germany. And, therefore, while heartily acquiescing in Compulsory Service, and even in some forms of controlled industry and controlled trade, I desire, so far as in me lies, to protest against reaction in politics, in commerce, and in social affairs. Freedom is the rule—control the exception. Control must show cause, and the demonstration must be conclusive. When the war comes to a close we must not drift back into the defenceless condition of the latter nineteenth and early twentieth century; but neither must we become Huns and Prussians.

EDWARD STANLEY ROBERTSON.

## THE BUDGET.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

Scarcroft, near Leeds,

10 April 1916.

SIR,—You speak of the Budget as involving "compulsive thrift", but is this quite correct? Do history and our personal knowledge of human nature justify the theory that high taxation induces plain living? Do they not, on the contrary, lead us to believe that the larger the proportion of a man's income which is taken by the State the less will be his inclination to save?

If you want to produce thrift tax luxuries, but do not penalise in undue measure either capital or income. Complaints have been made of the large consumption of champagne in some of our fashionable restaurants "in this time of warfare and distress of nations". Well, to check unseemly extravagance of this sort—as it appears to the critics—all you have got to do is to put a special war tax of 5s. a bottle on champagne, not to take from the thrifty owner of hard earned savings—who probably never touches this wine of luxury—a gigantic proportion of his income. Tax the capitalist, great or small, beyond a certain point and he argues—or acts as though he had so argued—that he may as well insure his life to a reasonable extent and then spend his income as he gets it. Especially is he likely to take this line to-day, when he thinks he has reason for believing that at least a million a week has been spent since the war began in artificially high wages, etc., given in the first instance for the purpose of securing the support of the Labour Party.

*Silent leges inter arma:* a great war lands us on a different plane from that upon which we dwell in peace time, and amid the clash of arms all laws, economic and ethical, human and divine, are ignored. Let us not think, however, that by ignoring them they cease to be, and imagine that a botched Budget, compounded on no definite principle, can be anything but harmful, in so far as it openly attacks those accumulations of private wealth which, in the aggregate, form the financial resources of the nation.

In conclusion, surely the time has come when we should recognise that if the Empire is to be maintained the wage-earning class must take its due share with others in the upholding? After all, the less prosperous sections of the community get as much, materially, from the British Empire as those who are better off, while, sentimentally, their gain is greater, the dustman really deriving more satisfaction from "thinking imperially" and from his membership of a ruling race than the duke, since the latter has other advantages which are at least equally important. Meanwhile, those who talk glibly about "equality of sacrifice" should remember that in the present war the upper class has made proportionately greater sacrifices in life and infinitely greater sacrifices in money than any other portion of the community.

Yours faithfully,

C. F. RYDER.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

11 April 1916.

SIR,—Entirely agreeing in your criticism of the Budget, I notice you do not allude to one provision which seems deserving of attention. Apart from the injustice of withholding any part of a person's income for a year more or less, and perhaps compelling him to borrow in the meantime, there is the question of whether tax at 5s. is to be deducted by tenants and debtors generally. If it is, the landlord or creditor must reclaim any excess either from the Government or the debtor. But he cannot do that until about a year has elapsed, as he could not prove his income sooner, and, if he is to be left to claim from tenants or borrowers he may find that they have by then disappeared! If the Government is to repay him, the same objection applies as regards loans, though the tax on houses will have been collected. But to require a landlord or lender to

reclaim from others involves his producing evidence of his income to each of them! That would be sufficiently objectionable, but they could not even be pledged to secrecy as Government officials are; and every man's private affairs would soon be the property of all his neighbours and others! If the 5s. deducted is to apply to public loans and company dividends only, then those who invest in them will be worse off than landlords and money-lenders.

Your obedient servant,

ZETETES.

## AIRSHIPS AND THE NAVY.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

Sports Club, S.W., 17 April 1916.

SIR,—In one of your leading articles last week a clever but surely somewhat pre-historic personage finds fault with Mr. Pemberton Billing for his prophecy that the Air Service would one day exceed in numerical and military importance and political significance both the other Services. I have no knowledge of military matters whatever, and quite possibly I am rushing in where even experts would fear to tread, but I possess a measure of intelligence and common sense, and I take it that Mr. Pemberton Billing is more than justified in his prophecy, considering the rate at which aerial matters are hurrying forward to a hitherto undreamed of consummation.

The writer of your extremely interesting and able article surely lays too much stress upon the necessity for Britain's eternal supremacy being based on the seas; but the engineer, and possibly also the chemist, are changing all that, and it appears more than likely that in the not far distant future Britain's throne will be not on the waves but in the air—that is, if she is to remain mistress even of the seas, let alone any other portion of the globe. We abandon not our supremacy—we shall never give that up—we only change one throne for another. The truth of the matter is that we are called upon at this most critical time—and for the sake of victory in this present war as well as for the sake of our future peace and safety—we are called upon to revise our whole train of thought, our entire outlook upon life and the world. We must not only abandon old prejudices and hide-bound traditions and outworn creeds and shibboleths, but even what appear to us to be actual solid facts and methods of warfare or even of general life and progress. We must scrap-heap much that up to this very morning has appeared inevitable and irreplaceable. If necessary, we must scrap-heap even our Navy and our Army, ridiculous as it may appear to-day to make such a statement.

The air is going to take the place of earth and water. In twenty years' time we may have cast great ocean-going liners, as well as Dreadnoughts and Jack Johnsons, upon the scrap-heap. Mr. Grahame-White told me himself only a few months ago that he fully expected within five years to be running a regular weekly or bi-weekly service of huge passenger and cargo airships to New York, which would make the passage in fifteen or twenty hours from London.

Mr. Pemberton Billing, a practical man of affairs, with a wonderful capacity for vision and imagination, tells us that in ten years or so either we or some other nation will possess 100,000 airships of unimagined power and capacity—a vast fleet which will be able to lay a land in ruins from one extremity to the other within a few hours of the declaration of war. Where, then, will be the necessity for either Navy or Army? He foresees the day when aircraft will not be an auxiliary of our present fighting forces, but when they will absolutely and entirely replace and render them out of date. And in such case the victory will be either to that nation which possesses the largest, best equipped, and most capably handled air-fleet or to the nation which is first in the air with such a fleet.

The great lesson of this most pressing crisis in the life of the nation is that we must not lose one single hour in talk. Mr. Billing declares that he can actually let us have such a fleet as he has discerned in his vision within a few months. It seems important therefore that, if not for Heaven's sake,



at all events for the safety of the Empire, he should get to work without a moment's delay; and, so far as a mere outsider can form an opinion, he appears to be the best man for this particular job.

I write, of course, under the assumption that aeronautics will be pursued as scientifically in the future as they have been in the past. Judging from experience and from actual happenings, nothing can nullify Mr. Billing's and Mr. Grahame-White's prognostications but sheer inaction and inertia on the part of the aeronauts, the mechanics, or the manufacturers. It is only a question of scientific and inevitable progression and development. It seems to-day absurd to imagine a time when our Navy may be superseded, but will it appear so absurd and impossible in 1926?

RAYMOND BLATHWAYT.

"J. F. R."

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

Ross, 17 April 1916.

SIR,—I can testify to the pleasure and enjoyment I, for one, have always had in reading the contributions of "J. F. R." to the SATURDAY REVIEW, apart from music, of which I understand nothing.

The writers of the memoir in last week's issue ask you to reprint an article of his. May I suggest the reproduction of another which I believe was entitled "My French Cats"? As a reader of the SATURDAY REVIEW for many years, I confess to a sense of personal loss when I read of his death.

Your obedient servant,

A. G. SOWERSBY.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

17 April.

SIR,—My first knowledge that "J. F. R." was no more came from your issue of 15 April, and, although unknown to me save through your columns, I felt a sense of personal loss which I should like to record. The writers of the notice in yesterday's SATURDAY REVIEW have the advantage of personal acquaintance with "J. F. R.", but I should like to bear testimony that one, at all events, who knew him only from his writings, gathered almost exactly similar conclusions as to his powers. About 16 years ago I bought a copy of the SATURDAY REVIEW containing an article with his initials, and since that time your Journal has been my weekly joy. He must be indeed a very hasty and careless reader who could look upon "J. F. R." as a "fire-eater and savage, intractable assessor". If I have not misread his works, his truest delight was in praise. One felt the absolute sincerity of his words and knew that something of real value in art had been created when those words appeared in print. Somehow "J. F. R." seems to have imbibed the spirit of the SATURDAY REVIEW—a spirit of independent expression of opinion combined with a power of writing illuminating articles which can be read with enjoyment by amateurs like myself, even when treating of subjects of which they have but slight technical knowledge. Why is it that "J. F. R." was almost unique in setting forth the truth that above and beyond all theories and technicalities lie the mystery of music itself and its appeal to the soul of man?

M.A. (Oxon).

#### EQUALITY OF SACRIFICE.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

17 April 1916.

SIR,—In a leading article in your issue of the 8th inst. you rightly disparage the use of the catch-phrase "equality of sacrifice". Such a thing is necessarily unobtainable; but nevertheless there are many inequalities produced unnecessarily by political intrigue or legislation. Of these the incidence of direct taxation produces notable examples. This falls with undue severity on middle-class households with

incomes between £200 and £600 a year. There must be many hundreds of such households, and I think no one could maintain that they are not called upon to make sacrifices far greater than those both above and below them in the social scale. In cases where the income is "unearned" these unfortunate people have to give up one-quarter of their income, and though it is true they may eventually recover a portion of this, the fact remains that the money is not available to meet current expenditure. Think of the position of the unfortunate widow, with perhaps two or more children to educate, deprived of a full quarter of her income! Even amongst this section of the community the weight of direct taxation is unequally distributed, for the bachelor and the married man without family can meet without undue hardship taxation which must load with debt many men who have children to educate. Most people must know of such cases from experience, and the following is an example: A married man of my acquaintance has an income of £630, of which £180 is unearned—i.e., derived from the investment of past savings. Unfortunately for him, he purchased the house in which he lives about three months before the war. In order to meet the increased expenditure and taxation last year he had to surrender the bonuses which had accrued during the last ten or fifteen years on his life-policy and to give up altogether his sickness and accident policy. By this means he just managed to pay his way. This year he will have to meet direct taxation of over £100, in addition to paying 1 per cent. more on the purchase price of his house than he anticipated. He will be quite unable to do it, and will have to choose between giving up his insurance policy altogether or passively allowing the collector to distraint for the tax when due. The direct taxpayers of limited means, though called upon to pay an unfair share of the increased taxation, are politically impotent and have no redress. Their incomes are in many cases reduced; whilst they see around them the working classes clamouring for increased wages commensurate with the rise in the cost of living, and vigorous protests from Labour members and others if it is even proposed that these classes should pay even a small tax on their amusements; and they note with mingled feelings of envy and disgust that these clamourings and protestations are usually successful.

I enclose my card.

Yours faithfully,

X. Y. Z.

#### SIR JOHN GORST AND THE CENTRAL OFFICE.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

Glendora, Hindhead, Surrey.

SIR,—Mr. Arthur Baumann's comments in the SATURDAY REVIEW on the career of Sir John Gorst will revive the feelings of lively regret, so widely held, that the services of such an acute observer and thinker as the writer of the memoir were retained for so short a time on the Conservative benches of the House of Commons.

Sir John Gorst did not stay long at the Central Office, and his successor, Sir George Bartley, showed little aptitude for the position. I believe Lord Abergavenny and Lord Chilton (Mr. Akers-Douglas) may be credited with the finding of the right man in Middleton, whose immense assets were tact and personal charm. He had the knack of creating and increasing individual enthusiasm in prospective candidates—a far rarer quality than the power to throw money and carpet-bags to party champions for remote constituencies. Middleton's services were recognised by a fine party testimonial, but he, of course, like Gorst, withdrew to other fields of activity when Mr. Chamberlain's influence became uppermost on the passing of Lord Salisbury, and the long period commenced of organic futility and electoral sterility, cringing to Labour without conciliating it, and raising hopes in the minds of other classes utterly impossible of attainment. It may, indeed, be honestly said of this notable Birmingham politician and organiser that he successfully organised the Conservative party out of existence. What men like Gorst and Middleton would have done, had they been retained and given the confidence of their party, is sufficiently obvious.

They would have kept the Birmingham group as servants, but not as masters, and given the country a continuance of that careful, consistent, and successful Conservatism identified with the names of Salisbury and Devonshire.

Unlike Gorst, Middleton did not live to see the grim justifications of his opinions at the next appeal to the country, when practically every Conservative Leader was thrown out of his seat, and even the so-called Chamberlainite majorities at Birmingham fell by thousands.

Your obedient servant,  
J. LANDEFEAR LUCAS.

#### "KULTUR AT HOME."

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

Wimbledon,  
2 April 1916.

SIR,—I have seldom read anything with more amazement than I did the letter on the play "Kultur at Home" in your last issue. The malice of the attack is extraordinary. I don't know if "Cassandra" is a man or a woman—one would naturally assume the latter—but it looks like some man with strong pro-German sympathies: the sort of being who regards women as beasts of burden only useful to slave for him in the kitchen and save money for him to fling about on his infidelities; and she must dress in the dowdy clothes made by her own poor fingers, while he runs after the lady in the smart creations that he pays for. Thank Heaven we are fighting that sort of Kultur and that sort of man. We don't want him here, or the wretched wife who permits his existence—and Margaret Tinworth's sole offence to "Cassandra" seems to be that she refuses to be such a wife. Also that she wears pretty clothes and loves the beautiful instead of the ugly. The accusation that she flirts (the word harlot even is used in connection with her!) is as outrageous as the rest of this venomous attack.

The sole point on which one might agree are Margaret's views of the marital relations—were it possible to discuss such a subject with such a mind as "Cassandra's".

Yours truly,  
AN ENGLISHWOMAN.

[We cannot continue this correspondence.—ED. "S.R."]

#### ATALANTA IN CALYDON.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

SIR,—As Mr. Edward Scott asks for the opinion of your readers, may I be permitted to assure him that the lines as written by Swinburne, and as they have invariably been printed, are much finer poetry than they would be if altered as he suggests.

The lines, of course, mean, "Time, with a gift of sorrow—grief, with brevity of life".

Yours faithfully,  
SAMUEL WADDINGTON.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

SIR,—In his examples of Swinburnian "inversions" Mr. Madden is unfortunate.

"Gave the cypress to love, my Dolores,  
The myrtle to death"

is, on its own showing, by internal evidences an intentional and deliberate inversion. The other two instances given are not inversions at all, but, respectively, amatory and metaphysical commonplaces. Swinburne is always most careful in his English symbolism and mythology: he would no more represent Grief with "a glass that ran" than Horace would write of Saturn's caduceus or Juno's sheaves.

"Ordinary intelligence", in any case, is preferable to pedantry, and ordinary intelligence and common sense say that Mr. Scott is right in his correction.

Yours faithfully,  
VICTOR B. NEUBURG.

## REVIEWS.

### WAS SHAKESPEARE A TORY?

"Shakespeare's Industry." By C. C. Stopes. Bell. 7s. 6d. net.

"Shakespeare and Democracy." By Edward Salmon. Macbride, Nast. 1s. net.

THERE is a great temptation to discover that Shakespeare belongs to one's own party, or is, at least, a kindred spirit with oneself. It is almost like finding out that Nature herself is on our side. Even a scholar like Mrs. Stopes yields to the temptation of trying to discover that Shakespeare was a man she would rather have liked to know and have had no difficulty in getting on with. Mr. Salmon is frankly more direct in his approach, though he is rather more careful than the men who claim Shakespeare outright for their own party. Mr. Salmon, indeed, is a little impatient of attempts to show that Shakespeare would have voted buff or blue. He tells us, at once, that Shakespeare "was as superior to any mere party or class feeling as it is possible for mortal to be"; that, if he was anything at all, he was a Liberal Conservative; that he understood all men of all degrees, and had as fine a sympathy for the great as for the small. This, at first sight, seems disinterested enough; but, if we look into it, we shall find that on all these points Shakespeare remarkably agrees with Mr. Salmon.

Mr. Salmon very rightly protests that the view of Shakespeare presented by some of the later Socialist critics—the view that his politics consisted mainly in a complacent and an obsequious snobbery—is wholly absurd. Shakespeare, it is true, did not believe in the wisdom of multitudes, and he deeply distrusted Humanity with a big letter. But that was not because Shakespeare was a snob. It was because he had watched a crowd at work and because he was too greatly interested in men and had too great a liking for individual people to put them into large, inscribed parcels. Shakespeare does not talk about Humanity, because he has found out that people are more interesting than the People. He does not trouble himself overmuch with the Masses because he has too much imagination to think crudely of human nature in gross bulk. He is not concerned with the crowd, except to observe what every statesman, poet, philosopher has observed—namely, that a crowd is not a council. He is interested in poor Dick and poor Harry, not with the poor; just as he is interested in King Richard and King Henry, not in kings; in Beatrice and Desdemona, not in women. Shakespeare's study was not mankind, but men. The charge that Shakespeare was a snob rests upon the fact that he does not put Humanity into Socialist perorations and indictments. He leaves that to lesser men—men who can mistake phrases for thoughts and imagine that human nature can be wisely talked about in general terms.

But party need not necessarily be "mere" party. Tories and Radicals would not have lived so long or fed so fat the ancient grudge between them if their quarrel reached no farther than the lobbies. There is a sense in which Mr. Gulland whips for the Radicals and Lord Talbot for the Tories. But there is also a sense in which Shakespeare and Milton whip mankind to a mightier division. In this high sense the Tory Shakespeare would no more have gone to Heaven and Hell for his theme than the Radical Milton would have gone to Eastcheap. For it is of the essence of the Tory Shakespeare to be content to live in the world, to deal with men and women, to accept life with all its passions and chances. The man who conceived Falstaff believed in the present life of this world, in things as they are, in men of all kinds and degrees, in flowers and birds, in all the urgent and thronged visible appearances of Nature. He accepted the world. It did not instinctively occur to him when he saw a thing to wish it were otherwise. He flung himself imaginatively into life with an unflinching zest; and, where a man less abounding in a sense of the welfare of mere being would have turned away, he



was only the more urgently impelled to penetrate and to stay. Milton would have seen in Falstaff no more than a diseased, ribald, and penniless old ruffian, and have turned thence in loathing to build a universe where even the fallen angels are impressive. For Milton, unlike Shakespeare, was of a Radical or negative temperament. He was not satisfied with the world, or with men and women; even his garden must be unearthly, where weeds do not grow and there is less hard labour to be done. He has the Radical itch, as soon as he sees a thing, to wish it were something else. Since he had also the mightiest imagination of any English poet except Shakespeare alone, he was able to build himself a refuge from things as they are and dedicate it to all in posterity who might wish for a moment to indulge the impatient dream of a perfect Humanity. Critics have wondered that the man who wrote "Paradise Lost" could also have written shrill pamphlets against Salmasius, and been anxiously interested in divorce. How could a man who flew into the void be so keenly occupied with earthly matters? The answer is that, when Milton is occupied with earthly matters, he is occupied with wanting to have them different from what they are. He was a man for deputations and committees. He was exactly the right Secretary for Cromwell. He wanted to change the world. Failing in that, he fashioned another universe rather more to his liking, and solaced himself with a blind hero who pulled down the temple of Philistia upon himself and his enemies.

We are here concerned with more than a political distinction. We are concerned with the two main kinds of men who share the world between them. There is the kind which is comfortable upon the earth—not necessarily rich or successful or privileged; but naturally built to make the best of the world as it is. Quite as often as not this comfortable or positive kind of man is not especially favoured in fortune or possessions. It is enough that he has a share in the world and that the sun shines upon the just and the unjust. He is content with the sufficient evil of the day. The other kind of man is not thus content. He would have the just, as he esteems them, put into the sunlight and the unjust put into the shade. He would like every third day to be the Day of Judgment. Shakespeare has less of this kind of man in his temperament than any poet who has ever written. Dr. Johnson grumbled terribly at Shakespeare's disregard of poetic justice, at his willingness to let all kinds of men live unpunished, at his enormous tolerance. You will rarely find Shakespeare wishing the world, or even a man in the world, away. He has shown us people in his plays who do so wish: there are, that is to say, temperamental Radicals in his plays. But Shakespeare takes as much pleasure in them as in all the other people. He is as ready to let live a Radical as to let live Falstaff or Caliban. He is, in fact, too good a Tory to be a party man—a position which often occurs with good Tories in practical politics and explains why Radicals are the better electioneers. Shakespeare allows Brutus to walk at large, even to be something of a hero; whereas Brutus would have put old Falstaff under lock and key or quarantined him in a hospital for incurables.

Shakespeare, in truth, was so good a Tory that he could not be a "mere" party man. He had no views, no programme, no stock set of ideas, phrases, and aspirations which he desired to put in operation for the benefit of the world. The world, as it was, was his delight. He does not yearn after idealised landscapes of Eden. He rejoices instead in Dover cliff, in the choughs and crows and gillyvors—above all, in men and women as life offers them to his imagination. In this sense Shakespeare is temperamentally a Tory.

Of one thing we may be sure: Shakespeare, as we have said, was content with the world; and Shakespeare's world was England. Perhaps at this time it may be well to adjourn the inquiry into Shakespeare's politics and be satisfied with noting that he is our greatest poet patriot. More than any of the

English poets he is with us to-day in the great war. We may freely use any words of his to strike the enemy, and there are many in his plays as bright as swords. Shakespeare was a patriot—a description behind which in these days we hardly need to look. We shall do well to affirm once more—it cannot be affirmed too often—the intense patriotism of Shakespeare, a patriotism he has expressed again and again in immortal terms. Shakespeare was no internationalist half-fighter. He would have had nothing to say in these times about "living with Germany after the war". He loved England too well for that.

#### THE VIA MEDIA.

"Aristocracy and Justice." By Paul Elmer More. *Shelburne Essays: Ninth Series.* Constable. 5s.

MR. Elmer More is an American writer who keeps in touch with European affairs. He has chosen for his motto the Horatian command to wonder at nothing, or never to wonder at anything; but his readers are expected to show surprise over a great many things in their own conduct and in popular cranks and customs. *Nil admirari*, it appears, is not a motto for those who seek improvement by studying printed words; it belongs to the physicians and critics of ailing life. As a bacteriologist is not surprised when he finds in a patient one of the many microbes which are apt to kill, so Mr. More is not surprised when he sees in modern society everywhere teeming evidence of brain troubles.

His quiet mood and searching method bring him to close quarters with actual life, and yet Mr. More is an idealist, a believer in the curative agency of aspiring words and phrases. He sees as a scientific doctor, he thinks very often as a dreamer. Observation tells him that Modernity has been sick of self-love, like Malvolio, and that its rival "isms" have been symptoms of the same disease. These facts Mr. More views and reviews as frankly as possible. For instance: "Just as the sentimental philosophy of the eighteenth century preceded the Napoleonic wars, so our humanitarianism, socialism, equalitarianism, pacifism—all our sentimental isms—are indeed not the direct cause of the present war, but have so prepared the material for it that a slight spark was sufficient to set the whole world aflame with the passions of suspicion, hatred, and revenge, and to arouse in the most scientific land of all a veritable mania of organised brutality. All this is not the end: it is an admonition to reconsider those ideas of justice and discipline and true government which we have so lightly thrust aside for the flattering liberties of the self-styled New Morality. Will the warning be heeded when the peace of exhaustion has come, or shall we mistake fatigue for wisdom, and so drift on to the utter catastrophe?"

Mr. More is right enough in his diagnoses, but when he talks of remedies he is a friend of half-measures. In fact, Mr. More believes in the Victorian fashion of the *Via Media*. Middle positions are greatly praised by him, though the *Via Media* has ever been a blind alley, leading nowhere. If Mr. More were asked to find the ideal middle position between truth and falsehood he would feel insulted. Yet he fails to see that middle men in ethics, in art, in politics, trifle with self-contradictory propositions in the hope that oil will mix with water or fire with sand. "Isms" are dangerous just because they are positive doctrines that gain an impassioned faith from feeble minds or from degraded characters. They are symptoms of disease, and every disease has its own logic. No one sees more clearly than Mr. More that incalculable mischief has been done by sentimentalists; yet he tries also to show that they have done some good. Is poisonous claptrap of every sort to be given to the public in medicinal doses, as doctors prescribe perilous drugs? If so, how is the treatment to be controlled?

There is a chapter on "The Philosophy of the War". It was written in November 1914 and published two months later in the "Unpopular Review". Here, as elsewhere, Mr. More sets limits to the great principle of stern order in thinking. His vast subject is handled with a varied skill, but not in relation to those defensive needs of society that seem to be permanent. Whatever war may be, it is as old as human nature, and talk about Nietzsche, Treitschke, and Bernhardt, like talk about the pacifists, has no practical value unless it centres around the two aspects which war has ever had—the aspect of aggression and the aspect of neglected defence. The tragedy in the making of this war was the contrast between extremes of action, not between extremes of mere talk; for pacific nations declined to arm themselves efficiently, though Germany warned them many times of her intentions. They preferred to quarrel at home rather than make themselves ready for her attack. Mr. More must see this point as clearly as we see it, yet he arrives at no decision of a rational nature. "The earth is ours", he says, "and the desire of peace still abides. Others may advance their practical schemes for securing the future peace of the world; one thing is sure, we shall not really profit from the frightful discipline of this experience unless we effect some change in our inner attitude towards life, and so escape from the false dilemma of our philosophy. As I have said, from one of the extremes, in its intellectual form, we may seem to be not so much in peril. But we need very much to examine the bases of the absolute humanitarianism that has won our tolerance, if not our allegiance. We need . . . to revise our philosophy of emotional expansion, with its tendency to glorify extremes, for a saner perception of the virtue that lies in limits, and for a keener search after the truth that dwells in mediation."

A soldier would keep to the main points. "A nation that wants to be safe from aggression must train her young men to defend her. There is no protection in talk and no virtue in being defenceless". Even in his attitude to justice Mr. More is a pilgrim on the *Via Media*. He defines justice as "nothing but the balance within a man's own soul, self-imposed and self-sustained, the will to know clearly the middle truth between the philosophy of egotism, which declares that it is for the strong and prudent to take whatever they desire, and the contrary philosophy of equalitarian sympathy". By what enchantment in the mind of man is this "middle truth" to be reached? Mr. More puts up no finger-post. He passes on to another general statement: "Justice is the Everlasting Morality of distinctions and of voluntary direction opposed to the so-called New Morality of drifting".

Phrases are perilous things. Mr. More forgets that "the Everlasting Morality" is claimed by every brotherhood and sisterhood of sentimentalists. It is their advertised stock-in-trade. But we find no fault with Mr. More. Though he does not know how to treat fanatics, he certainly knows how to describe the mischief done by them. And he is a good Conservative in his politics. In his long chapter on "Disraeli and Conservatism" he is at his best, though on two points he loses touch with his subject. Mr. More fails to understand the value of Disraeli's Imperialism, and dwells too long on what he calls a strain of falseness in Disraeli's mind. The only statesman for whom Bismarck had a respectful fear is not a man to be criticised to-day by those who think in English. How fortunate Europe would have been during the past twenty months if Disraeli had been alive and in his prime! There would have been scope enough for his genius and for his unconquerable will.

The *Via Media* invariably leads a writer away from the practical main points of a chosen subject. In another chapter Mr. More makes an attack on the mystic in the late Professor Cramb, instead of concerning himself with the statesmanly warnings that Cramb gave to dreamers and faddists. Englishmen are generous when a foreigner criticises their big men; but now is not the best of times to make a call on their generosity.

## THE CENTURY OF MONTAIGNE.

"The Century of the Renaissance." By Louis Batifol. Translated from the French by E. F. Buckley. Heinemann. 7s. 6d. net.

"EVERYTHING was full of sap; everything was boiling over." These words, written by Théophile Gautier of the creative period of his youth, can, and have been, used with yet greater justice to describe the century of the Renaissance in France. One may read M. Batifol's book in the hope of gaining some single, definite idea—of finding some master-key which will give understanding of a wonderful age. Only disappointment can follow. There is no clean-cut impression, no certainty of aim. Certain figures do, indeed, stand out of these pages, of whom we may say that, for this reason or that, they were typical of their time. In particular, we would name Margaret of Navarre, Montaigne, and Catherine de Medici; yet there are at least as many whom one could only mention by the side of this trio for the sake of anti-thesis. The sap runs strong and the blood boils; men and women realise that there is a new youth in the world, yet one can see nothing but confusion. Certain choice individuals, in whom has mysteriously flowered a spirit from the ancient world, enter half-playfully into this disorder, observe it curiously and tolerantly, perhaps try to direct it with a wave of the hand. These seem to be the true children of the Renaissance. The trouble is that too many others take part in the game and bring to it the usages of the Middle Ages, whence "the blood-stained anarchy" which gives a title to the most dramatic chapter in M. Batifol's book.

It is a century full of contradictions. No amount of ingenuity serves to reconcile Rabelais and Calvin, though in both one finds revolt, energy, portent of dissolution. These two stand for the extremes of optimism and pessimism. The joyous curé of Meudon may on many matters have been a cheery sceptic, but in the goodness of human nature he passionately

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believed. The Geneva preacher had no such faith. For him the breaking of the Roman chain was simply a preliminary necessary to the forging and binding on of one tighter and more galling. The theory that liberty should be allowed to truth but denied to error was proclaimed by him and his disciples as loudly as by the Inquisition. Servetus could have met no worse fate in his native Spain than fell to him in the "free" Swiss city. No breath of poetry, no vision of classic art, no singing of the Pleiades could destroy the savageries of the Middle Ages in sudden fashion. Rabelais himself is a Gaul, and not a Latin, in his immoderate appetite, but he has all that tolerance that was to prevail and to crown the century. "Do what you like" was the motto of his fabled abbey of Thélème and its monks. "They rose from bed when it seemed good to them; drank, ate, worked, slept when the wish came to them. Nobody woke them; nobody forced them to drink, eat, or to do anything of any sort. For this Gargantua had ordained."

Between Calvin and Guise, Huguenot and Leaguer, the spirit of Thélème came near to being crushed, yet through all the horrid time of blood and riot there were some who held it dear. Right up to the eve of the ghastly collision of the two parties, and long after their vedettes had done one another to death, Catherine de Medici, as M. Batifol makes plain, had striven for liberty of thought. In this desire, too, she had brought up her son, the king who was presently to be driven by the violence of the factions into giving the signal for St. Bartholomew. On the morrow, indeed, the woman could bear herself boldly, brazenly, thankful that it was not the Royal House that had perished; but for Charles there was only anguish and humiliation to come. In his mind he saw all the killed as his victims; he wished to die, and he died. One thinks of the young king now as himself the victim of them all; of the turbulent, bigoted throng who for years had battled over France, until it seemed as though there could be no peace unless one-half of them were annihilated.

"Let us keep company with death", wrote Montaigne. This delicate lover of life had lived through the epoch of war and persecution without loss of equanimity. He had not thrown himself into the midst of a fray that did not interest him, had scarcely troubled himself "to take sides", even mentally; yet he had not blenched at its thunders. To enjoy life exquisitely, balancing every effort by its probable reward, to eliminate from death the element of shock, that seems to have been a part of the true Renaissance spirit of which Montaigne was the perfect example. It is a pity that M. Batifol gives so little space to the character of this philosopher, the prince of essayists. It is true that he had no part in the acts of history; but his idea of tolerance foreshadows the reconciliations and recantations of the reign of Henri Quatre. Certain high ideals, or ideals that seemed high to the zealots of the period, had to be abandoned because common sense showed that their pursuit was forcing a whole people into depths of misery. Henri Quatre was not the perfect Renaissance king—he had in him more of Rabelais than of Montaigne—but he was the necessary and desirable product of the century. M. Batifol gives us an excellent idea of the happy state of France in his reign, or, at least, in its closing years. It is comparable with some of those descriptions given us of England in early Stuart times by Burton. The "long beard, furrowed brow, wild eye, and uncombed hair" which, Ronsard wrote, were the symbols of Calvinism, could disappear. The "Tragiques" of d'Aubigné, memories of the religious strife, had to wait until Ravallac had struck his foul blows before they could be published. The true feelings of France, disgust and weariness with the long wrangle, had been given in the "Satire Ménippée", and the French nation had whistled itself back into good humour with the "Villanelle à Rosette" of Philippe Desportes. The century's history has a happy ending. After the tempestuous spring there was at least a period of most glorious summer.

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Books that come from his press never have a factory look about them. We cannot understand how it is that the Americans, who study and collect things of beauty in print and in art, do not trouble to produce themselves books in good taste. Their volumes really appear to be produced by the pound avoirdupois. Yet they buy up, we believe, many of the old editions published by firms like Edward Moxon and Pickering, with whom the making up of a book was often a task of joy and enthusiasm. Those men could dwell lovingly on a title-page, and we are convinced that many of their seventeenth and eighteenth century predecessors must have had the same feelings over many a volume; otherwise how could they have made such lovely title-pages. We have often heard, and should always combat, the view that so long as a book is printed in good large type and the binding holds together, the rest does not matter—all that matters is the literary contents. It is a view that men so far apart as Charles Lamb and John Ruskin would utterly have condemned; and they would have been right in condemning it. But, of course, it is idle to contend in this matter with an opponent who does not and cannot discover any value in what we call taste.

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